

Claims

We claim:

- 1 1. A physiologically-acceptable agent, adapted to deliver a nucleic acid to a cell,
2 comprising inorganic particles to which are bound a cell-binding component and the
3 nucleic acid.
- 1 2. The agent according to claim 1, wherein the particles are of a biodegradable
2 metal oxide or a salt.
- 1 3. The agent according to claim 1, wherein the particles have a polymeric
2 coating.
- 1 4. The agent according to claim 2, wherein the particles have a polymeric
2 coating.
- 1 5. The agent according to claim 3, wherein the coating is biodegradable.
- 1 6. The agent according to claim 4, wherein the coating is biodegradable.
- 1 7. The agent according to claim 1, wherein the particles are from about 5 nm to
2 about 100 nm in size.
- 1 8. The agent according to claim 1, wherein the particles are magnetisable.
- 1 9. The agent according to claim 1, which additionally comprises a nuclease
2 inhibitor.
- 1 10. The agent according to claim 9, wherein the inhibitor is Group 3 ion.
- 1 11. The agent according to claim 1, which additionally comprises a nucleic acid-
2 binding protein and the nucleic acid comprises a segment having affinity for that protein.

1 12. The agent according to claim 1, wherein the nucleic acid is bound via a
2 complementary sequence linked to the particles.

1 13. The agent according to claim 1, wherein the particles are homogeneous
2 and/or substantially free of water-soluble material.

1 14. The agent according to claim 1, for use in therapy.

1 15. An injectable composition comprising an agent according to claim 1 and a
2 physiologically-acceptable diluent.

1 16. A physiologically-acceptable vector comprising the coated particles and
2 bound cell-binding component, but not the nucleic acid, as defined in claim 1.

1 17. A method for the treatment of a patient using gene therapy, said method
2 comprising administering an effective amount of an agent of claim 1 to the patient.